Plaintiff JOSHUA SANDOVAL, individually, and on behalf of all others similarly situated ("Plaintiff"), alleges upon knowledge with respect to himself and upon information and belief based, in part, on the investigation of counsel, as follows:

# I. PRELIMINARY STATEMENT

- 1. Plaintiff brings this action, individually and on behalf of all others similarly situated, against Defendants (as defined in ¶13, *infra*) alleging violations of 15 U.S.C. § 1693 *et seq.*, commonly known as the Electronic Fund Transfer Act (the "Act"), and 12 C.F.R. § 205 *et seq.*, commonly known as Regulation E ("Regulation E"), which contains regulations promulgated by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System to implement the Act (the Act and Regulation E shall hereinafter be collectively referred to as the "EFTA").
- 2. The EFTA establishes the basic rights, liabilities, and responsibilities of consumers who use electronic fund transfer services and of financial institutions that offer these services. The primary objective of the EFTA and Regulation E is the protection of consumers engaging in electronic fund transfers. 12 C.F.R. § 205.1(b). The EFTA requires specific disclosures be given by operators of any automated teller machine ("ATM") to users of an ATM, prior to the imposition of a fee for using an ATM. 15 U.S.C. § 1693b.
  - 3. The Congressional findings and declaration of purpose regarding the EFTA provides:
  - (a) Rights and liabilities undefined

The Congress finds that the use of electronic systems to transfer funds provides the potential for substantial benefits to consumers. However, due to unique characteristics of such systems, the application of existing consumer protection legislation is unclear, leaving the rights and liabilities of consumers, financial institutions and intermediaries in electronic fund transfers undefined.

(b) Purposes

It is the purpose of this subchapter to provide a basic framework establishing the rights, liabilities, and responsibilities of participants in electronic fund transfer systems. The primary objective of this subchapter, however, is the provision of individual consumer rights

 The EFTA specifically requires that an ATM <u>must</u> have a posted notice attached on or at the machine informing consumers of the imposition of an ATM surcharge. 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3).

- 5. This case is brought under the EFTA based upon the fact that Defendants have imposed ATM fees on Plaintiff and other consumers without providing any posted notice as required by the EFTA.
- 6. Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and all others similarly situated, brings this class action against Defendants based on Defendants' violation of the EFTA. Plaintiff seeks, on behalf of himself and the proposed class, statutory damages, costs and attorney's fees, all of which are expressly made available by statute. 15 U.S.C. § 1693m. Plaintiff does not seek actual damages.

## II. JURISDICTION

- This Court has federal question jurisdiction pursuant to 28 U.S.C. §§ 1331 and 1337 and 15 U.S.C. 1693m(g) because this action arises under the Electronic Fund Transfers Act, 15 U.S.C. § 1693 et seq.
- 8. Venue in this judicial district is proper under 28 U.S.C. § 1391 in that this is the judicial district in which a substantial part of the events or omissions giving rise to the claims occurred.

# III. PARTIES

- 9. Plaintiff is a natural person who resides in San Diego County, California and used a certain ATM owned and operated by Defendants (as defined in ¶13, *infra*), which ATM is located at or about 5555 Balboa Ave., San Diego, California 92111 (the "Vons ATM"), within one year of the filing of this Complaint, and was charged an ATM surcharge fee by Defendants at the Vons ATM described in this Complaint.
- 10. Defendant CARDTRONICS USA, INC. ("Cardtronics USA") is a Delaware corporation authorized and doing business in California, with its principal place of business located at 3250 Briarpark Dr., Suite 400, Houston, Texas 77042. Cardtronics USA is a subsidiary of defendant CARDTRONICS, INC. ("Cardtronics"). Cardtronics USA owns and/or operates the Vons ATM.
- 11. Defendant Cardtronics is a Delaware corporation doing business in California, with its principal place of business located at 3250 Briarpark Dr., Suite 400, Houston, Texas 77042. Cardtronics owns and/or operates the Vons ATM.

- 12. The true names and capacities of defendants sued herein as Does 1 through 10, inclusive, are presently not known to Plaintiff, who therefore sues these defendants by such fictitious names. Plaintiff will seek to amend this Complaint pursuant to Federal Rule of Civil Procedure 15 and include the Doe defendants' true names and capacities when they are ascertained. Each of the fictitiously named defendants is responsible in some manner for the conduct alleged herein and for the injuries suffered by Plaintiff and the proposed class as a result of defendants' wanton and illegal conduct.
- 13. Cardtronics USA, Cardtronics, and Does 1 through 10, inclusive, are collectively hereinafter referred to as "Defendants"

# IV. BACKGROUND

#### A. Electronic Funds Transfer Act

- 14. "Electronic funds transfer" is defined as "any transfer of funds . . . which is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephonic instrument, or computer or magnetic tape so as to order, instruct, or authorize a financial institution to debit or credit an account. Such term includes . . . automated teller machine transactions . . . ." 15 U.S.C. § 1693a(6); see also 12 C.F.R. § 205.3(b).
- 15. Defendants are an "automated teller machine operator" as that term is defined by 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(a), which states: "Automated teller machine operator means any person that operates an automated teller machine at which a consumer initiates an electronic fund transfer or a balance inquiry and that does not hold the account to or from which the transfer is made, or about which an inquiry is made."
- 16. 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3)(A) and (B), and the implementing regulation, 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(b) and (c), require an ATM operator who imposes a fee on a consumer for "host transfer services" (an electronic fund transfer or a balance inquiry) to provide notice to the consumer of the fee before the consumer is committed to the transaction. Specifically, 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(b) states:

General. An automated teller machine operator that imposes a fee on a consumer for initiating an electronic fund transfer or a balance inquiry shall:

(1) Provide notice that a fee will be imposed for providing electronic fund transfer services or a balance inquiry; and

- (e) Imposition of fee. An automated teller machine operator may impose a fee on a consumer for initiating an electronic fund transfer or a balance inquiry only if
- The consumer is provided the notices required under paragraph
   of this section, and
- (2) The consumer elects to continue the transaction or inquiry after receiving such notices.
- 20. In connection with 2006 amendments to the EFTA, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve published its Final Rule and official staff interpretation which, *inter alia*, explained the EFTA's disclosure requirements as follows:

The final rule clarifies the two-part disclosure scheme established in Section 904(d)(3)(B) of the EFTA. The first disclosure, on ATM signage posted on or at the ATM, allows consumers to identify quickly ATMs that generally charge a fee for use. This disclosure is not intended to provide a complete disclosure of the fees associated with the particular type of transaction the consumer seeks to conduct. Until a consumer uses his or her card at an ATM, the ATM operator does not know whether a surcharge will be imposed for that particular consumer. Rather, it is the second, more specific disclosure, made either on the ATM screen or an ATM receipt, that informs the customer before he or she is committed to the transactions whether, in fact, a fee will be imposed for the transaction and the amount of the fee....

71 F.R. 1638, 1656 (emphasis added).

- 21. Thus, the statute and regulation require that a physical notice <u>must</u> be displayed informing consumers that the ATM imposes a surcharge, and that the ATM screen must definitively state that a fee will be imposed, before that fee is imposed.
- The EFTA imposes strict liability upon ATM operators that fail to comply with its disclosure requirements. See Burns v. First American Bank, 2006 WL 3754820, \*6 (N.D. III. Dec. 19, 2006). A plaintiff seeking statutory damages under the EFTA need not prove that he or she sustained any actual financial loss, or that he or she relied upon the lack of mandatory disclosure as an inducement to enter into a transaction. Burns, 2006 WL 3754820, \*6 ("Section 1693b(d)(3) prohibits an ATM operator from charging a fee unless it provides notice of its fee on the machine and on the screen, period, no mention of a necessary scienter.")
- 23. The notice referenced in 15 U.S.C. § 1693f has no arguable applicability to Plaintiff's claims because, among other things, Plaintiff is not an account holder of Defendants.

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- Plaintiff is a consumer as defined in 12 C.F.R. § 205.2(e).
- In October 2010, Plaintiff used the Vons ATM described in this Complaint in order to 33. conduct an electronic funds transfer involving the withdrawal of cash.
- The Vons ATM did not and does not have the fee notice required by 15 U.S.C. § 34. 1693b(d)(3) and 12 C.F.R. § 205.16, as it did not have any sign affixed to it or in close proximity to it informing consumers that use of the Vons ATM will or may result in an ATM surcharge.

35. Plaintiff was in fact assessed a \$3.00 ATM surcharge fee for withdrawing cash from the Vons ATM described in this Complaint.

# V. <u>CLASS ALLEGATIONS</u>

- 36. Plaintiff brings this class action on behalf of himself and all other similarly situated persons pursuant to Rule 23(a), (b)(1), (b)(3) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Plaintiff hereinafter sets forth facts and allegations more specifically in support of his class action allegations.
- Plaintiff seeks to represent a class of similarly situated persons, consisting of (a) all consumers (b) who initiated an electronic funds transfer at the Vons ATM described in ¶9, supra, and (c) were assessed a fee for withdrawing cash from the Vons ATM described in ¶9, supra, (d) on or after the date one year prior to the filing of this action and continuing through the trial of this cause or until Defendants are compliant with the EFTA by posting the appropriate notice (the "Class").
- 38. Congress expressly intended that the EFTA would be enforced, in part, through private class actions. 15 U.S.C. § 1693m(a).
- 39. Plaintiff is informed and believes, and thereon alleges, that there are at minimum, hundreds of members of the Class.
- 40. The exact size of the Class and the identities of the individual members thereof are ascertainable through Defendants' records. Defendants have exclusive control of this information.
- 41. Members of the Class may be notified of the pendency of this action by techniques and forms commonly used in class actions, such as by published notice, e-mail notice, website notices, first class mail, or combinations thereof, or by other methods suitable to this Class and deemed necessary and/or appropriate by this Court.
- 42. Defendants can generate data for its Vons ATM identifying each transaction in which a fee was charged. The data will include the date of the transaction, the amount of the fee and the personal account number ("PAN") for the consumer. The PAN includes a bank identification number ("BIN"). This information can be used to identify members of the Class.
- 43. The Class is sufficiently numerous to make bringing all parties before the Court impractical pursuant to Rule 23(a)(1) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

and efficient adjudication of the claims of the Class. While the aggregate damages that may be

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awarded to the members of the Class are likely to be substantial, the damages suffered by the individual members of the Class are relatively small. As a result, the expense and burden of individual litigation makes it economically infeasible and procedurally impracticable for each member of the Class to individually seek redress for the wrongs done to them. Plaintiff does not know of any other litigation concerning this controversy already commenced by or against any member of the Class. The likelihood of the individual members of the Class prosecuting separate claims is remote. Pursuant to Rule 23(b)(1)(A) of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure individualized litigation would also present the potential for varying, inconsistent, or contradictory judgments, and would increase the delay and expense to all parties and the court system resulting from multiple trials of the same factual issues. In contrast, the conduct of this matter as a class action presents fewer management difficulties, conserves the resources of the parties and the court system, and would protect the rights of each member of the Class. Plaintiff knows of no difficulty to be encountered in the management of this action that would preclude its maintenance as a class action.

# VI. CLAIMS

# COUNT I Against All Defendants for Violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1693 et seq. and 12 C.F.R. 205 et seq.

- 52. Plaintiff incorporates by reference and realleges each and every allegation contained above, as though fully set forth herein.
  - 53. Plaintiff asserts this claim on behalf of himself and the Class against Defendants.
- 54. Defendants failed to provide notices to the Plaintiff and the Class as required by 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3) and 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(c), and imposed a fee in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3)(C) and 12 C.F.R. §§ 205.16(b) and (e).
- 55. 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3)(C), and its implementing regulation, 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(e), prohibit the imposition and receipt of a fee for conducting an electronic fund transfer unless a notice of the fee is posted in a prominent and conspicuous location on or at the ATM.
- 56. Defendants imposed and received a fee in violation of 15 U.S.C. § 1693b(d)(3)(C), and its implementing regulation, 12 C.F.R. § 205.16(e).

1	57.	57. As a result of Defendants' violations of the EFTA, Defendants are liable to Plaintif				
2	and the Class for statutory damages pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1693m.					
3	58. As a result of Defendants' violations of the EFTA, Plaintiff and the members of the					
4	Class are entitled to recover costs of suit and their reasonable attorney's fees.					
5	REQUEST FOR RELIEF					
6	WHEREFORE, Plaintiff, on behalf of himself and the members of the Class, prays for:					
7	A.	An order certifying the Class and appointing Plaintiff as the representative of the				
8	Class, and appointing undersigned counsel as Class Counsel;					
9	B. An award to Plaintiff and the members of the Class of statutory damages pursuant to					
10	15 U.S.C. § 1693m;					
11	C.	C. Payment of costs of suit herein incurred pursuant to 15 U.S.C. § 1693m(a)(3);				
12	D.					
13	E.					
14	JURY TRIAL DEMANDED					
15	Plaintiff hereby demands a trial by jury.					
16 17	DATED: February 1, 2011  Mark A. Holeran					
18			MARK A. GOLOVACH			
19			PACIFIC COAST LAW GROUP			
20			501 W. Broadway, Suite 800 San Diego, California 92101			
21			Telephone: 619/400-4895 Facsimile: 619/684-3601			
22						
23			TRAVIS, CALHOUN & CONLON, P.C. ERIC G. CALHOUN			
24			1000 Providence Towers East 5001 Spring Valley Road			
25			Dallas, Texas 75244 Telephone: 972/934-4100 Facsimile: 972/934-4101			
26			Altorneys for Plaintiff			
27			JOSHUA SANDOVAL			
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# Case 3:11-cv-00217-BEN-BLM Document 1 Filed 02/01/11 Page 12 of 12 CIVIL COVER SHEET

SJS 44 (Rev. 12/07)

The JS 44 civil cover sheet and the information contained herein neither replace nor supplement the filing and service of pleadings or other papers as required by law, except as provided by local rules of court. This form, approved by the Judicial Conference of the United States in September 1974, is required for the use of the Clerk of Court for the purpose of initiating

I. (a) PLAINTIFFS		DEFENDANTS	DEFENDANTS			
loshua Sandoval, Indiv Situated	ridually and on Behalf of All Others Sir	nilarly Cardtronics US	리트			
	e of First Listed Plaintiff San Diego  EXCEPT IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES)	County of Residence of First Listed Defendant (IN U.S. PLAINTIFF CASES ONLY)  NOTE: IN LAND CONDEMNATION CASES, USE THE LOCATION OF THE LAND INVOLVED.				
	e, Address, and Telephone Number)  ific Coast Law Group, 501 W. Broadw	Attorneys (If Known)  '11CV0217 LAB WMC				
	CA 92101, 619/400-4895	<b>+</b>				
U.S. Government     Plaintiff	DICTION (Place an "X" in One Box Only)		F DEF  1 □ 1 Incorporated or Pr  of Business In Thi	and One Box for Defendant)  PTF DEF rincipal Place		
☐ 2 U.S. Government Defendant	☐ 4 Diversity  (Indicate Citizenship of Parties in Item III)	Citizen of Another State	2			
		Citizen or Subject of a Foreign Country	3 D 3 Foreign Nation	□ 6 □ 6		
IV. NATURE OF SU	IT (Place an "X" in One Box Only) TORTS	FORFEITURE/PENALTY	BANKRUPTCY	OTHER STATUTES		
□ 110 Insurance □ 120 Marine □ 130 Miller Act □ 140 Negotiable Instrument □ 150 Recovery of Overpayment & Enforcement of Judgmer □ 151 Medicare Act □ 152 Recovery of Defaulted Student Loans (Excl. Veterans) □ 153 Recovery of Overpayment of Veteran's Benefits □ 160 Stockholders' Suits □ 190 Other Contract □ 195 Contract Product Liability □ 196 Franchise ■ REAL PROPERTY □ 210 Land Condemnation □ 220 Foreclosure □ 230 Rent Lease & Ejectment □ 245 Tort Product Liability □ 290 All Other Real Property	PERSONAL INJURY  310 Airplane  315 Airplane Product Liability  320 Assault, Libel & 330 Federal Employers' Liability  340 Marine  345 Marine Product Liability  355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability  355 Motor Vehicle Product Liability  385 Property Damag PRSONAL INJURY Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Malpractic Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Malpractic Med. Med. Med. Med. Med. Med. Med. Med.	RY	□ 422 Appeal 28 USC 158 □ 423 Withdrawal 28 USC 157  PROPERTY RIGHTS □ 820 Copyrights □ 830 Patent □ 840 Trademark  SOCIAL SECURITY □ 861 HIA (1395ff) □ 862 Black Lung (923) □ 863 DIWCDIWW (405(g)) □ 864 SSID Title XVI □ 865 RSI (405(g)) FEDERAL TAX SUITS □ 870 Taxes (U.S. Plaintiff or Defendant) □ 871 IRS—Third Party 26 USC 7609	400 State Reapportionment 410 Antitrust 430 Banks and Banking 450 Commerce 460 Deportation 470 Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations 480 Consumer Credit 490 Cable/Sat TV 810 Selective Service 850 Securities/Commodities/ Exchange 875 Customer Challenge 12 USC 3410 890 Other Statutory Actions 891 Agricultural Acts 892 Economic Stabilization Act 893 Environmental Matters 894 Energy Allocation Act 895 Freedom of Information Act 900Appeal of Fee Determination Under Equal Access to Justice 950 Constitutionality of State Statutes		
🕱 1 Original 🗇 2 l	State Court Appellate Court	Reopened anoth (spec		Appeal to District Judge from Magistrate Judgment		
VI. CAUSE OF ACT	ION	are filing ( <b>Do not cite iurisdiction</b> on 1693, et seq.; 12 C.R.F. section olation of the Electronic Fund Train	1 205, et seq.			
VII. REQUESTED II COMPLAINT:				r if demanded in complaint: e: <b>1</b> Yes □ No		
VIII. RELATED CA IF ANY	SE(S) (See instructions): JUDGE		DOCKET NUMBER			
DATE 02/01/2011	SIGNATURE OF A	TTORNEY OF RECORD				